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NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20506

National Security Decision Memorandum

TO: The Secretary of State  
The Secretary of Defense  
The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Implications for U. S. Policy of the Participation  
of The People's Republic of China in Multilateral  
Diplomacy

The President has reviewed the paper prepared in response to National Security Study Memorandum 141.

He agrees with the study's conclusion that difficult policy choices are not presented, that our problems are essentially tactical, and that common sense usually suggests the limits within which answers will be found.

He believes, in general that the issues discussed in the study carry a greater immediate potential for disagreement than for cooperation between the U.S. and China. He therefore wishes, when possible, to defer all action on these issues until after his visit to Peking has further clarified the US-PRC relationship.

Accordingly, the President believes that our actions in the period before his visit should be governed by the following general principles:

1. Our overall aim should be to defer, for the time being, any action likely to force or encourage the Chinese to take positions on multilateral issues.
2. Where we must deal with the Chinese, we should adopt a businesslike posture and deal with them matter-of-factly without appearing either to be unduly solicitous or aloof.

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J. Saunders, National Security Council

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3. On issues on which the Chinese directly challenge or attack U.S. policies, we must to some extent tailor the tone of the response to the challenge, but should, in any case, strive to keep our statements factual, non-polemical and brief.

Following the President's China visit, we will review the NSSM 141 study to consider, in the light of his Peking discussions, what positions we might take toward the PRC in the U.N. and other multilateral forums.

Henry A. Kissinger

cc: Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff  
Chairman, Council on Environmental Quality  
Director, Arms Control and Disarmament Agency

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